GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:271
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2017
Rhino Hunting in Kaziranga National Park
Malviya Prof. Chintamani;Ray Dr. Ravindra Kumar

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of rhinoceros in the country including in Kaziranga National Park at present, National Park and State-wise;
(b) whether cases of poaching/illegal hunting of rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park and sale of the horns clandestinely in the international market have been reported;
(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to put a stop on the illegal hunting of rhinoceros; and
(d) whether any arrest has been made in this regard and if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the guilty persons?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a), (b), (c) & (d) :- A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c) & (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *271 ON RHINO HUNTING IN KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK DUE FOR REPLY ON 21.03.2017

(a) The number of rhinoceros in the country, including in Kaziranga Tiger Reserve as per the latest census done by the States is 2909. National Parks/Protected Areas wise and State-wise details are at Annexure-I.

(b) to (d) There have been instances of poaching / illegal hunting of rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park besides report of sale of their horns clandestinely in the international market. Number of rhinoceros poached in Kaziranga National Park during last three years and current year is as below:

S. No. Year No. of rhinoceros poached
1. 2014 27
2. 2015 17
3. 2016 18
4. 2017 (Till date) 1

Under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger, central assistance is provided to the State of Assam for Kaziranga, which, inter alia, includes support for protection infrastructure, 24X7 e-surveillance, deployment of local workforce, support for purchase of sophisticated weapons, constitution of Special Tiger Protection Force for use in Kaziranga National Park etc. Intelligence inputs are provided to the State from Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, Government of India besides co-ordination with other security agencies. In addition, the State has also taken a number of steps to strengthen rhino protection, which, inter alia, include: recruitment / deployment of 423 number of Assam Forest Protection Force personnel equipped with arms, 175 Armed Home Guards besides the regular forest staff, enhancing punishment for offenders through an amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (Assam amendment, 2009), empowering the forest staff to use fire arms while providing immunity from prosecution without prior sanction, sharing of intelligence inputs through State / District level co-ordination committees. For developing co-operation among fringe villagers around Kaziranga National Park and assist in curbing rhino poaching, 38 numbers of Eco-development Committees have been registered and through which development work in the villages are being taken up. A Special Task Force (STF) headed by an Additional Director General of Police has been constituted by the Government of Assam to curb rhino poaching in Kaziranga National Park. Number of anti-poaching camps has been increased in Kaziranga National Park to ensure effective surveillance.

A number of offenders have been arrested. Details of offenders arrested in last three years and current year is as below:

Year Offenders arrested
2014 47
2015 88
2016 59
2017 (Till date) 10

The arrested offenders have been produced in the Court of Law for prosecution. The Government of Assam has constituted Fast

Track Court for speedy disposal of wildlife cases including rhinoceros.

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